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Continuation Sheet

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S.J. Lesem Building, Adams Co, IL

architecture was leveled and rebuilt to serve the needs of larger companies. The latest architectural styles from the East quickly spread to Quincy, and structures were built according to trends in the largest cities. This pattern led to a mixture of architectural styles on every block. This tendency to rebuild, rather than sprawl, created a dense, thriving commercial core and set the precedent for growth in Quincy until WWII.

The S.J. Lesem Building is located on a lot in the original City of Quincy, first sold by the city commissioners in 1833. It is located one block west of the town square and two blocks east of the river. The history and location of the business are typical of the city's early commercial enterprises. The current building was constructed in 1871 by S.J. Lesem Brothers and Company after an agreement was reached with three other property owners regarding the use of the block.

Solomon and Isaac Lesem were born in Bavaria and came to Quincy in 1856 by way of St. Louis, where Isaac met and married his wife Katie. The brothers immediately began their dry goods and clothing business at 36 Fourth Street. In 1859, they were organized under the name of S.J. Lesem Brothers and Company. As their business prospered, they entered the wholesale business also and moved to the new McFaddon building at Fourth and Hampshire in 1864. By 1871 they had again outgrown their building and began construction on the building at 135-7 North Third Street with Steinbach Brothers as the contractors.

W.S. Warfield, Frederick W. Meyer, Gustave Levi, and Isaac Lesem purchased the lot on June 12, 1871 and agreed to break it down into four sections with an alley running along the rear for easier access. S.J. Lesem Brothers and Company at 135-37 North Third included all of corner lot one and part of lot two. This strip along Third Street between Maine and Vermont (100 and 200 blocks) soon became known as "Warehouse Row." A few years later, Solomon moved to New York to run the company's supply office. By 1879 the company had expanded to include the upper stories of a neighboring building. At this time, they employed 30 men, including eight salesmen.

The company was renamed Isaac Lesem and Company in 1882, still dealing in wholesale dry goods and notions. In 1887 Isaac Lesem and Company expanded into clothing manufacture. They opened the Noxall factory on the fourth floor of this building. This business grew also, and in 1889 they purchased another building, at